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Convoy live fire helps Atlas troops support 82nd CAB

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. April D. de Armas

Fort Bragg, N.C. – Lined up and ready to go, three mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles begin to trek slowly across the terrain. The support troops inside know they have to reach their destination successfully in order to supply needed equipment to the Soldiers there.

The support these troopers provide from the land enables the pilots and crewchiefs of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade to support other ground troops from the sky.

The Atlas Soldiers with the 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd CAB, took their training to the ground with a convoy live fire exercise, Aug. 28.

Second Lt. Pasqual Balena, 122nd ASB, 82nd CAB, monitor the progression from the tower as teams maneuvered through the controlled environment. They honed their combat skills as they practiced taking fire from an “enemy” while protecting their positions and fellow vehicles.

“We are a support battalion, and we often have to move equipment or supplies to other units in a deployed environment,” Balena said. “For some of our troopers, it will be their first time to move in a ground environment since we usually provide support through the use of our helicopters.”

Twelve gunners and their crew members spent the day running through the training lane first shooting blanks and then moving to live ammunition.

Staff Sgt. Donna Stevens, Company A, 122nd ASB, lead teams of four per vehicle during the daylong training, offering her experience and advice.

“Our gunners are getting familiarization training with their M2 .50 caliber machine gun as well as learning how to move while riding in a convoy within a combat environment,” Stevens said. “It is important for them to be comfortable with all types of movement due to the various missions we could be called to support.”

Traveling over rough terrain and on unfamiliar roadways is often part of the job when troopers enter a new area.

“In the CAB we are used to moving by air but it is important that they are comfortable traveling on the ground as well,” Balena said. “Our job is to support the 82nd Airborne Division during their mission to support the U. S. global response force and that might mean us having to go into areas that we are not used to.”

Not unlike their counterparts in the brigade they support, the Atlas troops know continued training here at Fort Bragg will only help them navigate the uncharted terrain they may encounter if their support were needed.

“We want to make sure that no matter what we are ready to fulfill any job we are asked to do and that means training to standard in any situation,” Balena said.

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Cutlines:



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FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Troopers with the 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, make their way through a convoy live fire range at Fort Bragg, Aug. 28. Traveling over rough terrain and on unfamiliar roadways is often part of the job when troopers enter a new area. Ground supply is one of the many ways the Atlas Soldiers support the 82nd CAB. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Walker Langstraat, 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade)



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FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Command Sgt. Maj. Kirk Innis, 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, inspects .50 Cal rounds used in a convoy live fire exercise Aug. 28. Traveling over rough terrain and on unfamiliar roadways is often part of the job when troopers enter a new area. Ground supply is one of the many ways the Atlas Soldiers support the 82nd CAB. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Walker Langstraat, 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade)



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FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Troopers with the 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade mount a M2 .50 caliber machine gun onto the hood of a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle (LMTV) before setting off through a convoy live fire range, Aug. 28. Traveling over rough terrain and on unfamiliar roadways is often part of the job when troopers enter a new area. Ground supply is one of the many ways the Atlas Soldiers support the 82nd CAB. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Walker Langstraat, 122nd Aviation Support Battalion, 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade)

EDITOR'S NOTES:

1. For questions about this article and the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade, please contact the 82nd CAB at 82cabpao@gmail.com or call us at (910) 813-8612.
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